



THE LAWRENCE

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Kooistra Named Faculty Speaker

STAFF REPORT

Congratulations to Director of Teaching and Learning Dana Kooistra H'14 '20 P'20 on being appointed as the Class of 2022's faculty speaker. A member of the history department, Kooistra was chosen by the current V Form to speak at this year's Commencement as she says goodbye to the School herself since the 2021-22 year is her last at Lawrenceville.

Upon learning of her selection, Kooistra was both "flattered and overwhelmed." Given how "Covid-19 has made it harder to know people on campus," Kooistra understood "that it might have been a harder year than usual to find a speaker whom [students] felt connected to," so she was especially honored that the Class of 2022 chose her for this role.

Throughout her 18-year tenure at Lawrenceville, Kooistra has especially appreciated the lessons that her students have taught her. After spending so much time in "such an achievement-oriented environment" like Lawrenceville, Kooistra has recognized "the importance of leading with humanity." She reflected, "[While] it's important to challenge students, at the end of the day, [nothing] can be more important than responding skillfully to the person [who is] right in front of you and the things that they need [at that given moment]." Kooistra also loves the quality time that she has been able to spend with her students, noting how she "[delights] in the students [whom she gets] to work with and [takes] so much joy from their growth and their discoveries."

While reminiscing on her time with her students, Kooistra said, "You can just feel [past students] on campus," adding that their influence is a "strong presence" on campus, especially in shared spaces like the concert halls of the Clark Music Center. After two years of the Covid-19 pandemic splitting the School community apart, Kooistra has especially been able to notice past Lawrentians' impact today, commenting, "I love that sense of continuity that I'm [now] experiencing...because I think that for so long, the distance really got in the way of [our] experience."

Reflecting on her own legacy at the School, Kooistra wants to be remembered for "having created some of the space that has allowed us to be more reflective and more honest" about aspects that Lawrenceville can improve on. Kooistra noted that when she first arrived at the School, the institution was "perhaps a little arrogant about [its specific] way of being" due to its position "in [the] private school universe," and she hopes that her work has helped foster an environment where Lawrenceville is more "open to acknowledging where [the School] could grow a little bit more."

Rebecca Chou '22 Named Valedictorian



Rebecca Chou '22

STAFF REPORT

Rebecca Chou '22 has been selected as the Valedictorian of the Class of 2022. Each year, Heads and Assistant Heads of Houses choose the Valedictorian from a group of V Formers who both excel academically and participate actively in Lawrenceville's community.

Throughout her Lawrenceville career, Chou has impacted many aspects of campus life, most notably as the President of the Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) and through her heavy involvement in Spectrum, the GSA's auxiliary publication. Chou recalled that her II Form year, she was "a scared, closeted freshman," but now, as GSA's president, she has helped orchestrate many of its new events on campus, "from Pride Week to the Coming Out Panel to raising the pride flag." Chou treasures the memories and achievements that the GSA has accomplished during her time at the School. "My favorite Lawrenceville memory has to be raising the pride flag for the first time," Chou said, "Lawrenceville has not always been a welcoming space for queer students, so being able to watch our school celebrate queer identities so publicly was something I didn't think I would get to see, let alone be a part of orchestrating. Being able to see the queer community come together publicly for the Day of Silence and being able to celebrate together was a moment I'll never forget."

When V Form Level Director Etienne Bilodeau informed Chou of her appointment as Valedictorian, Chou recounted, "I had a 'pinch me' moment where I thought I was dreaming. I'm honored to have the privilege of addressing our class at such a huge milestone, and I just

Cindy Shum '24/THE LAWRENCE

hope I can do it justice. It really just feels surreal to be Valedictorian, because I truly never expected this, but, more than anything, I'm incredibly grateful." Chou will address the graduating Class of 2022 during Commencement on May 29, 2022.

After receiving the news, Chou joked that she "should have chosen [her] graduation dress more carefully." However, all jokes aside, Chou's journey at Lawrenceville has "been a wild ride," she noted, "By nature, attending Lawrenceville means that you're surrounded by brilliant and talented people, and it can be hard to feel like you measure up at times. I've definitely found myself doubting my place here because of that. On the flip side, though, learning from each of my friends and classmates has been incredibly rewarding."

Reflecting on her time at Lawrenceville, Chou said, "Going to college, I'll miss our community the most. Beyond even the close friendships I've made, I'll miss being able to walk around campus and know the majority of the faces in any given place. I'll miss passing time in the evenings with whoever is on duty, and the close-knit community of my house. Above all, the people have made [this place] feel like home." Even though she may be parting ways with her friends geographically, Chou knows for certain that she'll "hold on to the friendships [she's] made here," and she noted that she's "definitely gotten through stressful [moments at Lawrenceville] by being surrounded by some of the most supportive and wonderful people [she's] ever met."

As one last piece of advice, Chou said, "Do what you love. When hard work is rewarding not from achieving the end goal, but from the work in and of itself, that's when you'll be at your best."

Witt Phillips '22 Named Aurelian Speaker



Witt Phillips '22

STAFF REPORT

The V Form recently elected Witt Phillips '22 as its Aurelian Speaker. The Aurelian Speaker is a class-voted student who best demonstrates "sterling character, high scholarship, and forceful leadership" and is also held in high regard by their fellow Lawrentians.

Over his three years at Lawrenceville, Phillips has demonstrated his exemplary leadership and character through his high level of involvement on campus, both academically and in extracurricular activities. Most notably, Phillips is involved in a plethora of clubs on campus, including L10 News, the Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA), and Spectrum magazine, as well as serving on the Honor Council. In addition, he was selected as a Hutchins Scholar and collaborated with the Stanford University School of Medicine's Seung Kim's lab in an effort to find better treatment and possible cures for pancreatic diseases. Although he joked that he is "not much of an athlete," throughout his time at Lawrenceville, Phillips has especially enjoyed PACK with Coaches Kelly Wise and Tony Rienzo.

When V Form Level Director Etienne Bilodeau contacted Phillips about his appointment as Aurelian Speaker, he experienced a wide range of emotions ranging from shock and gratitude to the "inevitable nerves among the swirl of emotions." More than anything, however, he "felt an overwhelming sense of connection to—and appreciation for—

Cindy Shum '24/THE LAWRENCE

[his] class and Lawrenceville." Looking back on his own time at Lawrenceville, Phillips fondly remembers moving into Woodhull House almost three years ago, but mentioned he could "barely recognize [that] person in [his] memory." From then to now, Phillips has not only changed physically but has grown as a "student, friend, and community member," he said.

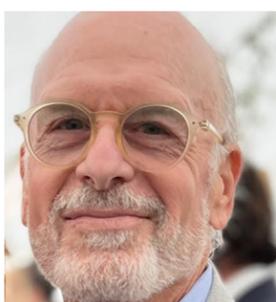
Phillips will address his classmates on the eve of Commencement; the event will be a social gathering where V Formers and faculty will convene to celebrate. As Bilodeau commented, the opportunity Phillips has been granted to address his entire class is "a very nice moment, and it's also an honor." Regarding his upcoming speech, although Phillips admits it will be a challenge to "capture even a fraction of the creativity, resilience, and joy that the Class of 2022 embodies," he is looking forward to this opportunity to address his class and honor the work of his classmates these past four years. "I hope to recognize the power in our collective difference while reminding the class of the connections that have held us all together," he said.

Finally, Phillips shared his major takeaway regarding his time at Lawrenceville: despite busy schedules and academic stress, each student at Lawrenceville can always count on the community and the rest of the student body for support. "More than any isolated lesson learned along the way, Lawrenceville has taught me to believe in the power of leaning into a community that cares for you," Phillips said.

Alumni Feature: Robert Kraft

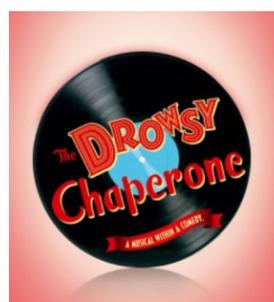
A profile of Robert Kraft '72, the award-winning music producer, on his time at Lawrenceville and beyond.

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Audition for the 2022 Fall Musical: The Drowsy Chaperone!

Sign up for your audition on the Periwig Callboard (KAC). Audition dates are on Tuesday, May 17, and Wednesday, May 18, from 6:00-8:30 PM.



Apply for Fall Musical Preseason Tech!

Calling Theatrical Technicians: Lighting, Scenery, Costumes, and Sound! All tech pre-season information is posted in the KAC at the Periwig callboard.





THE LAWRENCE

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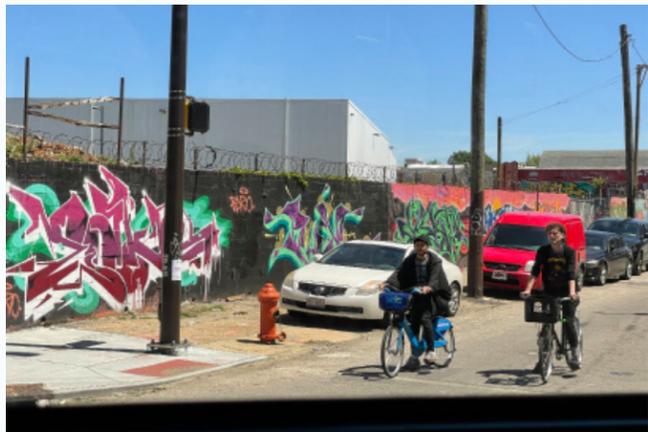
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CORRECTIONS

Readers who notice errors should contact the Managing Editor at kpark23@lawrenceville.org.

Photo of the Week: Community



In the southern corner of the pond, a lone lantern meanders above the opaque ripples.

Meanwhile, we linger on the little island in the middle of the pond. Our eyes remain fixated on a small bobbing lantern—one of the first to enter the water—and its faint orange glow. Mere moments ago, those floaters were nestled within our hands during our walk to the water. Now, it feels far too soon to close our still-outstretched hands and leave the lanterns behind.

There's a reason as to why there isn't—or, at the very least, why there shouldn't be—a particular timeline for the aftermath of a loss. Sure, we may try to adhere to some arbitrary timeline in hopes of finding comfort within certainty: a set end to the abhorrent pain that accompanies loss. Or we may forgo the established waiting period entirely and force the end upon us; we may feverishly attempt to restore the normalcy of our previous lives and move on. But, in truth, we can't schedule the rise and fall of our own grief.

We don't budge, and neither does the lantern south of our unmoving gathering. A few hisses and shivers momentarily break the silence that engulfed us; a gust has just barreled into our group. The cold of this sudden burst of air is not unlike the cold that grips that very phrase, "move on." It's the phrase that encapsulates our hopeless hope that one day, preferably sooner than later, we will no longer feel the full impact of the insurmountable loss that has collided with our lives. It's the phrase that expects us to resume our lives after a set mourning period—to leave behind whatever emotional baggage we have acquired to work at our previous pace. "Move on" implies the necessity of abandonment: to shed our sorrow and despair like a snakeskin and regard our loss as a temporary blip in our lives.

A nearby student turns their head away from the water. Not even the

crackling sound of a fire igniting on one paper side of the lantern—and the few gasps that follow—can lure them into a single glimpse. After all, acknowledging does not offer much comfort to us. The notion that acknowledging the ephemerality of life alleviates the harshness of grief feels as thin as the burning paper. Yes, the inevitability of death does provide us with a physical justification for a loss: humans are mortal beings, and therefore, our lives have to stop at one point or the other. But it provides no true justification for the injustice of our losses. This inevitability does not explain why an unexpected accident takes a loved one's life, nor why children, who have their whole lives ahead of them, have to go so young.

There's a lopsided hole in the lantern now. Apparently, the candle had tilted to the left and lit one of the sides on fire. What was once beige and flecked now simply does not exist. The same goes for loss; it burns an irreversible, irreparable hole through us. A newfound void mars the fabric of our lives, and we can neither wish or stitch it away. The void that loss leaves us with, just like the hole that the fire tears in the paper, is permanent. It becomes a part of us and alters who we are. We will never be able to move on from the void that has burnt itself into our lives—nor should we expect ourselves to.

But the void does not grow forever. At one point, the flames flicker out and the hole quietly shrinks into itself, just a little. Of course, the lantern we see now is far from the lantern that first entered the water. Our newest version is a bit crumpled, a bit gray, and leans a bit too heavily to the left. Nevertheless, it still manages to move forward.

Having learned to coexist with the void and to soothe our burns into lighter scars, we will move forward. It will be far from a linear path. The lantern, unused to the weight of the candle

pressing against one corner, wobbles wildly. It's fragile; a little breeze or a protruding reed could knock it over. A sudden wavelet rises out of the depths and crashes against those four sheets of beige-and-gold paper. For a moment, it seems as though the lantern will topple into the shallows. It stumbles backwards; it trembles violently in the wind. But then, another lantern drifts into view and nudges its struggling peer upright.

As the two skirt across those shallows, they skim past the reflections of their silent audience, all of whom have settled into mirror images of this newfound pair. One wraps an arm around their neighbor. Another envelops two younger students into a tight embrace. A group of seven huddle into a circle, reaching for each other's hands. For every reed, breeze, or wavelet that awaits us, there is someone to hold us upright before we tumble off our path. Perhaps we know who this someone will be—someone we already trust and love. Or perhaps it will be someone utterly new, but eager to help us nonetheless. No matter the hypothetical, however, we—all of us who have our own voids to come to terms with—will move forward together. We all share the same path or pond: we are close enough to reach out to one another and pull each other along in our collective journey.

When we find the time to gaze at the waters ahead of us, we see a little sun glimmering against the dark, unmoving surface. It's a delightful sight: the glows of the countless lanterns that entered the pond alone have amalgamated into one brilliant light. It's difficult to tell which one is our once lonely, singed lantern. We can only make out an effervescent blur of beige, gold, and orange that inches slowly, but determinedly, forward into the night.

-YC

To Read or Not to Read: That Should Not Be a Question

ANIKA PONNAMBALAM '25
GRAPHICS ASSOCIATE

I can guarantee that every single one of you has read something before, whether that be a book, a research paper, a script, or even just a math textbook. Reading written works plays an integral role in the life of every Lawrenceville student; most of our classes, for instance, require us to read for homework. As students, written works provide us with useful context, information, and discussion material in courses of various disciplines. But these works go beyond their academic value; writing is a superior form of media, and there are benefits to consuming it outside of a school setting. Although writing may seem to be outdated or boring at first glance, writing is actually a far more valuable informational resource than meets the eye.

This is not to say that written media has no bias at all; in fact, it is impossible to fully eliminate bias from any kind of information source. However, written media like newspapers and books are much less biased than other forms of media that are supplemented with audiovisual elements.

Audio media imposes pre-formed opinions onto its consumers. Yes, almost all media is biased, but when you listen to someone on a podcast or a TV show, you receive an extra layer of bias through the tone of a person's voice. A simple sentence such as "Joe Biden won the 2020 election" can be read in many different

ways depending on the speaker's opinion on the topic. Certain speech patterns can indicate certain emotions toward a topic. For example, even though a reporter may simply be reading a list of facts, their speaking pace, volume and tone of voice can all influence the way that listeners receive information. Eliminating the middleman by reading instead of listening to

someone else speak can help



Emily Pan '24 / THE LAWRENCE

the reader to develop their own opinion without the interference of tone interpretation.

Media with visual elements like movies or YouTube videos can also influence through various types of visual cues the viewer's interpretation of the topic. Colors, while they may seem benign, play a significant role in our brain's categorization of information. For example, we tend to associate the color red with anger and passion, while we associate the

ter with ire, while a blue-tinted video clip could lead the viewer to associate it with sadness or calmness. Shapes can also influence a viewer's opinion, as sharp edges usually have negative connotations linked to harshness or abruptness. On the other hand, softer, rounder shapes are viewed as more positive. If the recording has a person in it, facial expressions may cause the viewer to sympathize with the emotions or bias of the speaker. No matter how hard you try, it's impossible to avoid adding unintentional biases to audiovisual media.

Don't believe me? If you have read any book with a movie adaptation and watched the movie afterwards, think about the moment you first saw each character. Did Hermione Granger look exactly how she looked in your head? Did Gollum say "my precious" the same way you read it? Probably not. Before these movies came out, everyone had their own idea of how the characters looked and sounded. Now, everyone who has seen the Harry Potter movies

hears 'Hermione Granger' and thinks of Emma Watson, and everyone who has seen the Lord of the Rings movies hears Andy Serkis' voice saying "my precious." A more simple example: if someone screams at you, you are even more likely to heed their words. Whether we realize it or not, we are all extremely impressionable; we digest and internalize every aspect of the content that we receive. When you solely consume audiovisual media, you become a product not of your own thoughts but of the thoughts of others. I am not saying you have to enjoy reading, but I am saying that you should consume written materi-

When you solely consume audiovisual media, you become a product not of your own thoughts but of the thoughts of others.

al because it minimizes associations that impact your understanding and interpretation.

Unbiased media is beneficial to the consumer because it allows them to form their own opinions instead of pushing them to agree with the creator of the source. After all, every person should be allowed to develop their own independent ideas. The only way to truly achieve this is by consuming the media with the least amount of inherent potential bias: writing.

“Lawrenceville, I Love You Most Ardently”

Yes, the Grass is Quite Green on This Side

JUPITER HUANG '21
Co-OPINIONS EDITOR OF
THE 140TH BOARD

I can't deny that my years at Lawrenceville feel like a golden haze, with the joyous sense of discovery during Freshman Fall and the exalted chaos of Senior Spring punctuating my perception of those four years. Seeing through that deception takes unexpected resistance, but it doesn't escape me that life in the Circle was dominated by both tremendous hardship and the greatest of bliss. I am immensely grateful for the memories and lessons I carried out of the gates at Main Street; now, having experienced two semesters of college, I'd say that the “preparatory” part of Lawrenceville education has more than lived up to expectations. Even so, I wish I'd known more about how to make the most of my time at Lawrenceville—perhaps even by creating a package of memories over the course of four years to guide my freshman self on the journey ahead.

With that in mind, I'd offer two principles that I wish I'd lived by which would've tinted my Lawrenceville experience with a little bit more richness.

Firstly, I'd implore myself to open up my heart.

Going from a community of 800 or so students and a vaunted faculty to student ratio into a literal sea of thousands of bright minds at college was a shocking transition. Lawrenceville felt decently large, but upon reflection, the environment is one of unparalleled intimacy. There are many acquaintances I wish would've become my friends. Previously, reaching out and forging new connections felt daunting—

arduous, even—but it certainly beats the lingering regret that hit me during yearbook signings in the summer breeze. Each book I was passed, each name I listed, reminded me of just how much I appreciated their presence. Friendships are often forged through similarities, but there's no harm in branching out. Embrace the vulnerability of it. It took me too long to take down walls that shielded me from the possibility of rejection, and in doing so, I also shielded myself from the true strength of community within Lawrenceville's walls.

Opening up one's heart also includes bridging the gap with those outside the school's walls. Being a Lawrentian added a new layer of privilege to my existing identities. That's a hard thing to grapple with, especially upon leaving the Lawrenceville bubble. The moniker of being “a prep-school student,” of being from “the East Coast,” of having had the luxury to take a myriad of advanced courses lingers in college, often unsaid, and sometimes all too obvious. Therein lies the immense value of community engagement. Though I still maintain that LCAP was rigid in its structure and limited the social impact of a student's work through being only one weekly term project, I never truly appreciated how invaluable the “learning” aspect of service-learning proved. Informing

my gaze of social inequity and recognizing that each of us plays a role in the deep power imbalances that pervade every community we set foot into was an invaluable lesson. I had to open myself to being challenged, which required being vulnerable and entering into new spaces with empathy. Moreover, I felt compelled to

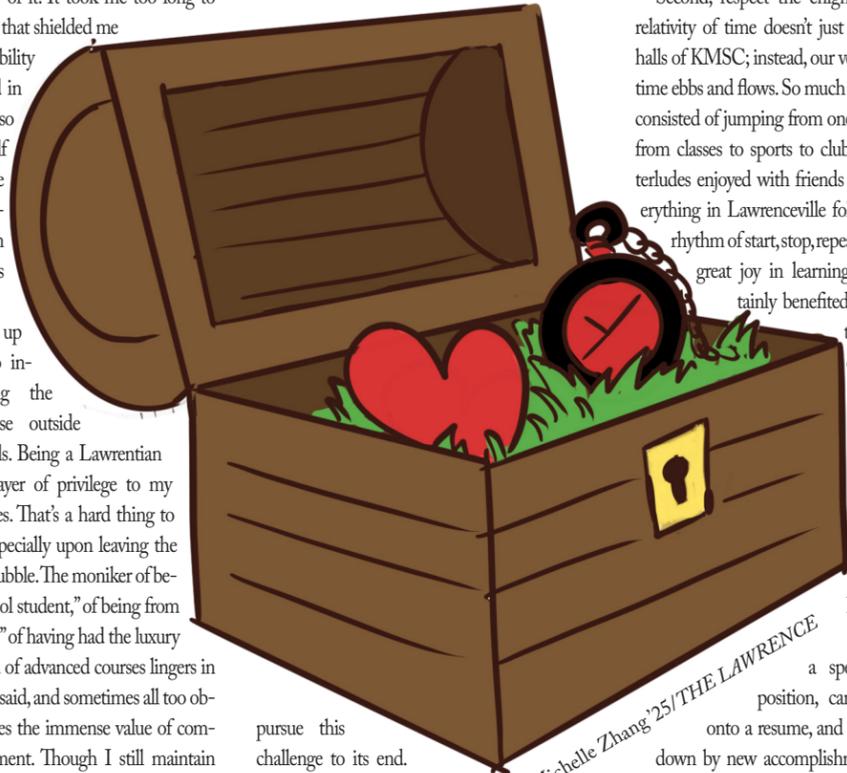
minority communities in New Jersey. So, for upperclassmen in particular: explore classes on poverty and gender, classes that center on Black and other minority voices, even if you don't see yourself reflected in those courses. You'll need to confront it again in college, so you might as well start early.

Second, respect the enigma of time. The relativity of time doesn't just haunt us in the halls of KMSC; instead, our very perception of time ebbs and flows. So much of Lawrenceville consisted of jumping from one task to another, from classes to sports to clubs, with brief interludes enjoyed with friends in between. Everything in Lawrenceville followed the rapid rhythm of start, stop, repeat. While I found great joy in learning, and have certainly benefited in college from the mountains of writing that Lawrenceville compelled me to produce, the learning itself doesn't define my memory. All the goals I set for myself, a specific GPA, a specific leadership position, came, got written onto a resume, and then got pushed down by new accomplishments in college. However, the hilarious, random conversations over *Insomnia* cookies and *Purple Cow* in the Lawrence office, the philosophical musings at an empty pod in Irwin, and the riotous bus rides to MAPL matches remain etched in my

mind. Or, to put it simply, Lawrenceville occupies a space in my mind through these wonderful lightbulb memories. Had I realized it sooner, I would've taken more seconds each day to just appreciate these moments as they came. Don't make my mistake; instead, take pictures, and journal regularly. Before long, Lawrenceville will reside mostly in your memories, and you'll want to have as many as possible.

As much as time seems to run away from us, we can also create time. Set aside a bit of your week for your hobbies. I don't mean publication work, rehearsals, or practice for next season's co-curricular. No, give yourself the luxury of reading a book, playing Nintendo games with housemates, or setting up an easel somewhere and painting. I, for one, thought that any time I set aside for something that didn't directly strive towards a goal would be wasted time. I'll tell you now, though, that going into college lavishes an influx of empty time and a flexible schedule upon you. Being able to plug that time in with activities that you truly enjoy, that bring some light into the suffocating grind of academic life, will be invaluable. Try and foster a bit more of yourself at Lawrenceville. You deserve it.

Without a doubt, Lawrenceville proved immensely tumultuous. It's a campus that produces some of the highest of highs and the lowest of lows. Navigating that journey has certainly helped me mellow out the demands of college, yet I always feel as though I left a bit of myself on the grass of the Circle just to get here. So, what I hope for every Lawrentian to achieve sounds rather hard, but in truth, is quite simple: emerge a fuller, kinder, and more determined person. If that isn't virtue flourishing to become ever greener, I don't know what is.



pursue this challenge to its end.

I needed to come to understand Lawrenceville's place in perpetuating racial injustice, in the racism and sexism that shaped its history, and the redlining that hampered, and continues to hamper,

On Being Bad at Lawrenceville-ing

DANIEL JOSEPH '18

There's a lot to be gained from the Lawrenceville experience. Yes, I call it the “Lawrenceville experience,” and not the “Lawrenceville education.” Because the person that you become after graduating from Lawrenceville is not merely a product of the classroom. Lawrenceville is a holistic developmental center. In addition to classrooms, it offers sports fields, the Irwin Dining Center, and House common rooms. All of these influences come together after four (or three, or two, or one) years to form the polished product that is a Lawrenceville graduate. So while classrooms certainly provide a central component of Lawrenceville, they are not the full adventure here. I learned just as much from sitting in my Heads of Houses' living rooms on Saturday nights watching basketball or hockey as I did from my V Form year elective classes.

This is not to say, of course, that classrooms are useless. Far from it. I felt, both during my time at Bucknell University and now at the United States Air Force Academy, that Lawrenceville's educational rigor more than prepared me for undergraduate-level study and gave me a clear academic edge over my peers. Lawrenceville enabled me to enroll in elective classes taught by subject matter experts, many of which I still have yet to see offered at an undergraduate

institution (I recommend Public Policy Economics to the rising V Form). But while the academic lessons made a lasting impact on me, what benefited me most during my undergraduate experience was the opportunity to make mistakes. Because, as any of my classmates from the Class of 2018 will tell you, I made a lot of mistakes at Lawrenceville. Some of them

have been easier to come to terms with than others. But I hope to share some of them with you all now, in the hopes that some of you will choose to make different mistakes.

I was a four-year varsity wrestler who qualified for the National Prep tournament twice. Yet I failed to be-

come a captain of the team. I was a varsity coxswain for the decorated Men's Crew, won a medal at the Stotesbury Cup Regatta, and went on to row at the collegiate level—yet failed to ever make the first varsity boat. I was President of the Impulse Improvisational Comedy Troupe—yet the club saw attendance decline and shows lacked an audience during my tenure. During my V Form year, I had run-ins with the Honor Code—and consequently our Dean of Students—not just once, but twice. In perhaps my most stellar example of failure during my time at Lawrenceville, I applied to be the Arts Representative for the Student Council during my V Form year.

When I was denied the position and asked the Student Council President for the reason behind my rejection, she bluntly told me, “You were not qualified, but we could not have someone on the Student Council that no one respects.”

Luckily for me, I made these mistakes at Lawrenceville between the ages of 14 and 18. Though it would be easy for these failures to leave a sour

taste in my mouth, the reality is that these mistakes were the best things to ever happen to me. Making mistakes at a young age permitted me to present the best iteration of myself in college. Failing—and failing hard—at Lawrenceville allowed me to set my undergraduate gaze on one goal: make different mistakes. Mistakes are unavoidable, but Lawrenceville allowed me to get some big ones out of the way while the stakes were low. My college experience has been all the better for it.

I suspect many of you are thinking: the stakes are not low. In fact, they could not be higher. You have MAPL championship matches, a significant other, and college admissions to worry about. You simply cannot afford mistakes. But this is the fallacy of self-importance at Lawrenceville: No one cares. Not about your grades, not about what college you go to, not about your extracurriculars. Because when you all move on to your next stages of life, if you all are still resting on the laurels you built for yourself in high school, you will have truly failed. Lawrenceville, as prestigious as it is, is still a high school. It is still a place for teenagers to be awkward, learn about themselves, and do things they will cringe about later in life. This is true of all stages of life; I am sure 30-year-old Dan Joseph will cringe at 22-year-old Dan Joseph. In fact, I hope for it! That's growth.

If the “Lawrenceville is still just a high school” argument does not sit well with you, let me offer another angle: we all turned out okay. I know lots of people from Lawrenceville—myself included—who fumbled so many

opportunities, bungled so many tests or disciplinary incidents, you name it. But we are all on the other side. So, so many of us are college graduates, educators, industry titans, and dedicated family men and women who have roofs over our heads, bread on our tables, and healthy, functioning bodies. We are all still chugging through life, in spite of our boneheadedness during high school.

My wish for current Lawrenceville students reading this, especially those of you who feel particularly dissatisfied with your Lawrenceville careers, is that you all remember Lawrenceville is a sandbox. It is a place to put yourself out there, find the breaking edge of your comfort zone, take chances that seem wildly out of reach, and fall flat on your face. The “failures” you make at Lawrenceville will pay dividends later. Though I would stress that you should not aim to fail, I would suggest you should want to grow so badly that the risk of failure does not scare you off. Fail as many times as you can; fail in social settings, in the classrooms, and on the fields. Fail in how you prioritize your time and your energy. Look back at your time at The Lawrenceville School and realize you will enter the next chapter of life equipped with a set of lessons many people will not achieve until their early 30s, or at the earliest their undergraduate years. Take stock of what you wish you had done differently, and then make different mistakes. Most of all, be grateful for a school that provides you this experience.



2022-23 Merrill Scholars Announced

HELENA CHEN '24
NEWS ASSOCIATE

The Merrill Scholars program, directed by English Teacher Rebecca Findlay, allows students to conduct interdisciplinary research in the Humanities by utilizing resources from library archives. At the end of the program, each Merrill Scholar will submit a 20 to 25 page paper with their own original topic after conducting significant research. The 2022 Merrill Scholars are IV Formers Andrew Boanoh, Yewon Chang, Grant Shueh, Ashley Wang, Tiffany Wen, Jasmine Zhang, Daniel Zhu, and Victor Zhu.

The Merrill Scholars program is far more independent than other English classes currently offered at Lawrenceville, as it requires a certain independence of thought and genuine excitement about student research. "In the Merrill Scholars program, you're required to engage both critically and creatively with your topic, to stretch yourself in both directions, because it's all about opening up your eyes to new possibilities," Findlay said. She hopes to introduce different critical theories to students in order to have "conversations with the text" instead of simply reading. "We really hope that [the scholars will] leave this program un-

derstanding just how much more there is to literary research than simply reading a text and responding to it," Findlay said.

There are two main parts of the Merrill Scholars program designed to help students develop their arguments. First, regular meetings with Findlay and teachers from other departments allow students to gain a more thorough understanding on their topic. Next, through extensive peer editing and discussion, students help each other discover alternate arguments and new perspectives on their research.

Regarding the selection process, Findlay emphasized that the scholars selected were not necessarily "the best English students;" rather, students were selected based on how successful they would likely be in the program. Thus, the selection process was more focused on the work submitted by the student rather than their personality or their past performance in English classes.

Boanoh has always been fascinated with language and the way language affects actions and thoughts. "During Harkness discussions in Lawrenceville's English classes, as intensive and in-depth [as] they are, I always feel that there's always a little bit left that I

could dive into...Merrill is that place where those discussions and those ideas that are sometimes left behind are going to get inspected and scrutinized," Boanoh said. He is excited about being accepted to this program and is ready to begin working on his research once the program begins.

Similarly, Chang had always loved literature as a young child. The Merrill Scholars program provides a mix of creative writing and archival research on a topic of her interest, allowing her room to explore a variety of subjects. "Traditionally, I thought that these research opportunities were limited to university level or undergraduate level," said Chang, but Merrill will allow her to pursue her interest in the Humanities at a high school level.

Looking forward, the most challenging aspect of this program will be about building an argument that is original and interesting. "It's a really exciting process. It's also really hard because you have to keep on [discovering] new ways of looking for more information," Findlay said, "I think that the more you look at something, the more it reveals itself, and that's why this process starts in the summer. It takes three months to figure out what other people haven't said."

2022-23 Heely Scholars Announced

SOPHIE CHENG '24
NEWS ASSOCIATE

Congratulations to the 2022-23 Heely Scholars, IV Formers Autri Basu, Lilly Gessner, Isabel Gray, Ely Hahami, Hartley Ju, Elizabeth Parnell, Aiden Rourke, and Yan Tsenter. During the upcoming summer, these students will be participating in a two-week boarding seminar during which they will conduct archival research.

Heely Scholars Program Director Anne Louise Smit P'10 '13 said that these chosen students "[demonstrate] a keen interest and ability" to further "their study of American history." To be considered as a Heely Scholar, selected applicants must demonstrate around the Harkness table a curiosity for history and a high level of performance on assessments. IV Form History teachers then nominate students who are additionally evaluated through personal statements and a short five-paragraph essay that measures historical analysis skills. Smit personally said that she also looked at the sophistication of the applicant's argument along with specific evidence chosen in the selection process.

Smit noted that "the intent of the program will be to introduce students to primary research," specifically, sources from the

School's Stephan Archives. The Archives have organized and preserved many records of historical value, allowing students to be well-assisted in their research process. The Heely Scholars will also engage in experiential learning, where they will be primarily in control of their growth in knowledge. They will be able to surround themselves with primary documents and "determine why they should care to put the history of Lawrenceville into the larger context of national and global history," Smit said. The selected scholars will also have the opportunity to visit other institutions.

Parnell views this program as an opportunity for her personal interest in history and her academic ambition to thrive in an environment facilitated by the plethora of information found in the Archives.

Rourke looks forward to having the chance to "research the individual stories behind historical events" alongside others who share the same extensive interest in history. Rourke described the Heely Program as an option to have time throughout his V Form year "to pursue whatever piques [his] interest." His excitement for the summer program lies in researching inside and outside of the

Archives, especially with the large access of documents to further deepen his own research.

From her own experience in the Archives, Gessner "found it incredibly fascinating" how the resources provided helped her and her classmates "trace how national events affected our own school."

This year, the Heely Scholars will research World War II. This topic was decided based on the School's collection of archives and how well the archive has been preserved and donated.

Hahami said that his passion for history, which includes foundation of knowledge about "the various aspects of democratic governance" and enjoyment from reading and analyzing cases equipped him with "critical thinking skills that weigh logical, moral, and multi-perspective arguments." He is also excited to dig into the Archives and read primary documents that spread the collective history of Lawrenceville.

Ultimately, "the goal of this summer program will be for select students to consider a particular portion of the collection in a manner that will facilitate the access and enrichment of Heely Archives by the larger community," Smit said.

2022-23 Student Council Vice Presidents Announced

HELENA CHEN '24
NEWS ASSOCIATE

Congratulations to the newly elected Student Council Vice Presidents of Academics, Honor and Discipline, and Social Life, IV Formers Iris Wu, Lucas Garcia, and Akeil Smith, respectively. The newly elected Vice Presidents will join School President Andrew Boanoh '23 as part of the 2022-23 Student Council.

Wu, the president of the Carter House and Lawrence Opinions Editor, decided to run for the position of Academic VP in order to bring new forms to the academic system, including changing the current school schedule so that it best supports Lawrentians. "Thinking of the past, I want to make changes that we can actually keep for a long time and that students will actually use because some [past] initiatives only apply to a certain number of people," Wu said. She plans on having a discussion with Dean of Academics Alison Easterling P'20 for a schedule change sometime in the near future. "Since we [currently] have an altered schedule, we will look at the benefits and disadvantages of such change and hopefully create a new schedule accordingly," Wu said.

One of the main points on Wu's platform was hosting internship fairs during Alumni Weekend, consisting of alumni looking for high school interns or volunteers. Wu noted that



2022-23 Vice Presidents of Academics, Honor and Discipline, and Social Life

Helena Chen '24/THE LAWRENCE

she's already talked to the Alumni Office about taking in student interns, and she is hoping to have the program up and running by next year. Her main focus is to start early and be active in communicating with the people involved because she wants these changes to be implemented as soon as possible.

Although Wu admits that Saturday classes cannot be canceled as of now, she is, at the very least, hoping that she can cancel all homework due on Saturdays. Wu commented that negotiating with faculty and the deans can sometimes be nerve-wracking, but she is excited to bring a change to

the current academic system.

By observing the people around him, Garcia realized that a lot of people have undergone stress and anxiety as a result of Lawrenceville's disciplinary system. "I wanted to do something, but I was not in the position to do anything [then], so I decided to run for [VP of Honor and Discipline] to bring support to the people around me," Garcia noted. "My main goal is to work with the administration to implement the minor system, providing students with more opportunities," he added. Such an initiative will take more time to implement, but a more immediate

and achievable endeavor that he is excited about is building an Honor and Discipline guidebook, where information on violation of school rules and the current disciplinary committee (DC) will be offered. Although Garcia admitted that he is most nervous to start sitting in on DCs because of how stressful and time-consuming they can be, he is ready to commit and put in the hours. "I want to thank everyone who stood by me and gave me this amazing opportunity, and I hope that I'll do right by everyone," Garcia reflected.

Smith, the Social Representative of the Dickinson House, ran for VP

of Social Life with the hopes that he could help define Lawrenceville's social culture in coming years. Smith noted that he "believes that with [his] thoughtfulness and diligence, [he] would be the perfect candidate to implement this new era of social life." The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has made it extremely difficult to carry on old traditions and aspects of "old Lawrenceville," but Smith believes that the next few years will be the foundation to bring a change to campus culture. "My goal is to make next year as memorable and as different as possible considering the years we have had during our time here," Smith said.

One of Smith's most ambitious ideas is to create a Social Council with members selected from each House so that every student's opinion is taken into account when planning events. Smith hopes that he can understand what purpose the Social Council needs to fulfill to achieve his vision of event diversity, expansion, and student feedback. "I've already started the conversations required to bring my promises to life, and I will do everything in my power to make next year truly unforgettable," he said.

Congratulations again to the new Student Council VPs. Lawrenceville looks forward to seeing what your tenure will bring.

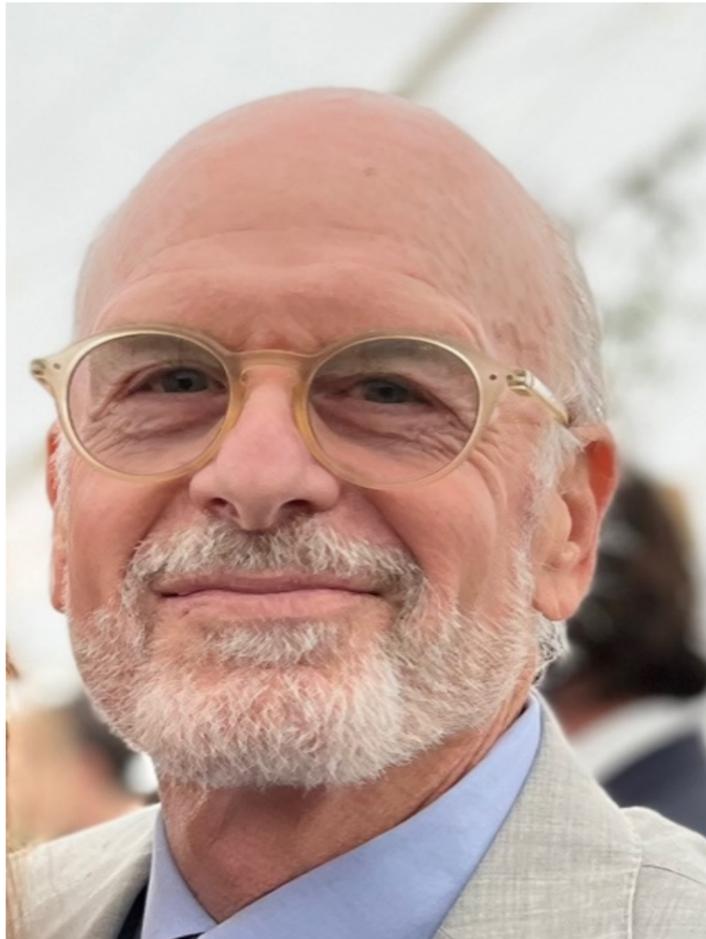
Krafting Music: Robert Kraft '72

KELLY LU '23
AND JASMINE ZHANG '23

When asked what his favorite aspect of creating music was, Robert Kraft '72 answered, "It's creating music. That's my favorite. My favorite aspect of creating music is creating music. What I love about it is everything. I like writing songs. I like making records. I like producing movies about music. I like working with great composers on movie scores. I like working with tremendous artists on their vocals."

Kraft is an award-winning songwriter, film composer, artist, and producer. Throughout his career, he has earned numerous awards and nominations from ceremonies such as the Academy Awards, the Grammy Awards, and the Golden Globe Awards. Additionally, as the previous President of Fox Music, Kraft worked on songs from famous movies such as *Titanic*, *Romeo + Juliet*, *Juno*, and *Life of Pi*. His other works also include co-producing all of the songs on the multi-platinum and numerous award-winning soundtrack, *The Little Mermaid*, including the iconic song "Under the Sea".

Despite his current success, Kraft defined his high school career at



Robert Kraft '72

Courtesy of Robert Kraft

Lawrenceville as a humbling yet ultimately enlightening one. To start, he had two older brothers who also went to Lawrenceville before

him—they were both valedictorians, captains of sports teams, editors of *The Lawrence*, and overall "Lawrenceville superstars." Kraft

even recounts how "[he] was told by [his] history teacher, in front of the entire class, that he was the least talented of the three Kraft brothers." Though it hurt him, the Lawrenceville period was a transitional experience for Kraft, and during his time in high school, he was able to redefine his high school years.

Kraft found solace in the music building "because [he] had a band who rehearsed together, and [they] played at Lawrenceville dances." But even then, Kraft played the piano alone in the music buildings, even while not performing. The music building became Kraft's happy spot, and in that very building, he was involved in all kinds of creative extracurriculars—he was the co-president of the Glee Club, a member of the Lawrentians, and even became the Actor Representative of the Periwig Club.

"I was [also] editor of *The Lit*, and so if you look at all [my extracurriculars] (writing, acting, music), none of it's academic nor athletic particularly. So in the end, I found that the place I could be comfortable at Lawrenceville was where I could be creative," stated Kraft. While Kraft mentioned his annoyance when "[he] was told not to write songs with double entendres by the head of the music department," he fondly remembers Periwig, as he was

able to foster his love for expression and being on stage through acting.

Some of his best memories at Lawrenceville, however, still go back to Kraft's love for music and performing. "I really remember my band playing at Lawrenceville and how much I loved that: my mom helping me load my equipment into the Kirby Arts Center, setting up the band, doing a little soundcheck." The excitement of the dancing, the performing, and being around his peers was the best part. "I just loved playing in the band. It was so fun. And so for me, I think that those are the happy times."

Like the rock star he is, Kraft looks to Duke Ellington and relates to the motto, "My favorite project is always the next." Looking to the future, Kraft says he is looking forward to working on a Ray Charles documentary series with Frank Marshall, another fellow film producer. He is also composing music for a dramatic series about a jazz band in the 50s with Quincy Jones, a record producer, and is working on another documentary on West Coast jazz. "It's a variety of different kinds of features and projects, but they all involve music, and they all actually involve black Americans who made music, which is really the area that I focus on."

Law is Lit: Lawyer and Novelist Paul Schmidtberger '82

SONIA IVANCIC '25
OPINIONS ASSOCIATE
KATHLYNN YAO '25

Amidst the sea of Lawrenceville alumni who turn out to be successful lawyers, politicians, or corporate executives, Paul Schmidtberger '82 is one of the few who has taken up a career in writing. Schmidtberger arrived at Lawrenceville from Schooley's Mountain, New Jersey, as a new III Former in 1979. He lived first in the Woodhull House and later in the McPherson House.

Though he is now a part-time writer, Schmidtberger admitted that he "didn't write at all for anybody, either in Lawrenceville or in college." Instead, his time at Lawrenceville was defined by his involvement in cross country, soccer, and the Spanish Club. His journey is one of many examples of how a student's path can easily change, as Schmidtberger only started honing in on his passion for writing after completing his studies. As Schmidtberger put it, Lawrenceville prepares students to "embrace changing directions," and his life perfectly embodies this core value of the School—just because you dive deep into a topic at Lawrenceville does not mean you are set to pursue that path for the rest of your life.

After graduating from Lawrenceville, Schmidtberger attended Yale University and then Stanford Law School, eventually becoming admitted to the bar in California. After practicing law for 10 years, however, he found that he much preferred teaching. He currently resides in Paris and has been teaching law there for the past 12 years. During these years, Schmidtberger "always knew that he wanted to write, but didn't [openly] admit it." He eased his way into the craft by writing privately on weekends and during the evenings, crafting short stories and essays. While working for a law firm, however, Schmidtberger discovered a clause in the French Legal Code which stated that if one wants to take a leave of absence, their company must allow them to do so. Eager to pursue writing more seriously, he took advantage of this law and took a year off of his legal work to try writing a novel, something that felt a bit intimidating given that he had "never tried it before." It only took him that year, however, to finish his novel.

While Schmidtberger did not end up publishing this manuscript, he did publish another novel, *Design Flaws of the Human Condition*. In this novel, he explored the subject of revenge, "something [he] finds interesting, perhaps because of [his] law career," and also puts



Paul Schmidtberger '82

Courtesy of Goodreads

his characters in tough positions so that they could "triumph, but not in a sugary way." A central theme he focused on throughout his novel was the ability to rise out of difficult situations in real and humane

ways. This theme can even be found at Lawrenceville, where our rigorous studies and co-curriculars often put us in tough positions. It is not always easy to get back on track when we feel burned out, but Schmidtberger's

book demonstrates that while there are steep road bumps ahead, we will be able to conquer them in our own ways.

Schmidtberger has a very specific way of organizing his writing process: he writes, prints out his pages, puts them in a binder, edits them the next morning, and starts over again. Schmidtberger appreciates the ways that Lawrenceville's English department helped prepare him for his writing career; "the very high standards, the critical skills, the analytical thinking" shaped him into the writer he is today. To aspiring writers at Lawrenceville, Schmidtberger has one main piece of advice: "The blank page is not the writer's enemy...it is feeble and easily beaten."

At the moment, Schmidtberger has another novel in the works, where the writing is "going well and easily," though he has some "thinking off-the-page" to do in order to draft a roadmap for the middle and ending of the novel. His firm advice to current Lawrentians is to "focus on the here and now" and "take classes that [we] enjoy" rather than the ones that look appealing on a resume. From Schmidtberger, we can learn to write without fear of the daunting empty page, take more electives that excite us, and not spend too much time worrying about the future: We can decide on our future once it arrives.

From the East to the West: Journalist David Ottaway '57

WILLIAM WANG '24
FEATURES ASSOCIATE

"I was there when Haile Selassie was overthrown in Ethiopia. I was there when Nelson Mandela walked the walk to freedom after 27 years in prison. I was in the stands when Anwar Sadat, the president of Egypt, was assassinated by an Islamic extremist," said David Ottaway '57 P'86 '91 GP'24 '25, speaking about his impressive career. A former Assistant Editor for the 77th *Lawrence* Board, Ottaway worked as a Middle East Correspondent at *The Washington Post* for 35 years, was nominated for two Pulitzer Prizes in investigative journalism, and graduated from Columbia University with a doctorate in political science and comparative politics.

One of three siblings, Ottaway followed in the footsteps of his brother and sister who both went to boarding school, coming to Lawrenceville in 1953 as a II Former. Recounting a letter he sent to his brother during his first term, Ottaway said Lawrenceville taught him the importance of perseverance. "I was going to flunk out. The work was so tough, so difficult. Eventually, I did make it by learning the meaning of grit, and just sticking to it. Lawrenceville made all the difference in the world in terms of where I could go to college." Later on, Ottaway was recruited by coaches from both Yale University and Harvard University for swimming. The most memorable experience he had at Lawrenceville, however, was not spent in the pool but rather in the office of *The Lawrence*. Ottaway specifically recounts writing an Opinions piece that doubled as his senior thesis. The editorial discussed the exclusion of African Americans who were deferred from writing for *The Lawrence* by then-President of the Board of Trustees Edwin M. Lavino, Class of 1895. "He didn't want to have African-Americans at Lawrenceville. He didn't want women either...I never forgot that, dealing with the higher-ups at school," Ottaway said.

Ottaway eventually attended Harvard University, graduating magna cum laude in history in 1962. Ottaway then began his career as a freelance foreign correspondent in Africa before relocating to Cairo to cover the Middle East for *The Washington Post*. "Foreign correspondents get to see history in the making and I find that really exciting," Ottaway said. When discussing the importance of the Middle East in a historical and modern context, Ottaway highlighted the location's role in global politics, saying, "I would put the Middle East among the [three] most important areas of the world," specifically in regard to Western involvement in regional conflicts, its status as an oil-rich region, and its role as a recipient of American arms. During his time in the Middle East, Ottaway was present for the assassination of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat. "It was total chaos," remarked Ottaway, "I actually ran down to the podium because I wanted to find out whether Sadat had been killed. There was so much confusion that nobody stopped me."

Ottaway was nominated for two Pulitzer Prizes in investigative journalism, one for a series of articles surrounding the global oil crisis in 1983 and the other regarding the embezzlement of the Nature Conservancy, a global environmental organization based in Virginia. Ottaway, and a group of co-authors unraveled the embezzling the organization conducted, condemning its similarities to "inside trading on the stock market, where you directed conservation funds to partly to spare the land and relocate it elsewhere."

While reflecting on his career, Ottaway remarked that "there's no career I can think of [pursuing] other than being a diplomat to some extent, but they don't get out and actually see what's happening." Despite the danger, he believes that working as a foreign correspondent "allows you to see the worst and the best of humanity, great cruelty and kindness...it's really quite an experience." Ottaway



David Ottaway '57 P'86 '91 GP'24 '25

Courtesy of the Wilson Center

attributes the increasing difficulty of working as a foreign correspondent to the rise of social media, yet he remains fascinated by the commitments of many young writers who "are still dedicated to investigative journalism."

"There are some successes, but it's a very stressful job. If you're driven to make money, don't go into journalism. If you're fascinated by what's going on in the world and want to go see for yourself, journalism is your career."

As Ottaway considers the next generation of reporters, their opinionated take on journalism continues to frustrate him: "I think it's very important to remain neutral because you'll discover that your hypothesis or research was wrong." Ottaway advises writers to not "start out by trying to prove a point, but rather by trying to find what is going on." Recounting the year it took to piece together his case

against the Nature Conservancy, Ottaway returned once again to the idea of perseverance. "It's at Lawrenceville that I learned about grit, and it has served me very well, serving me all the way through my career and education."

Ottaway, who has served on the Board of the Alumni Association for 13 years and is a trustee emeritus of the School, reflected on returning to campus last weekend: "I want to see how the campus is changing." Ottaway was excited to see how the culture on campus has diversified and improved because "back when [he] was there, everybody was a white male." He acknowledges the polarization that Americans experience, yet emphasizes that in places such as Lawrenceville, "students of all races and religions have to learn to talk, even argue with each other, but in a respectful manner."

Back to the Boys' Club: The 1992 Senior Prank

JACKIE WILLIAMS '24
FEATURES ASSOCIATE

Senior pranks—whether they be the pile of chairs in the Circle or cows in Woods Memorial Hall are how the V Form class of each year leaves its mark on the school in some way or another. One of Lawrenceville's longest-tenured faculty members, English Teacher Gus Hedberg H'03 P'96 '00, believes that this "final exam" confirms the V Form class's worthiness after four years at Lawrenceville. This test requires immense cleverness and planning in order to cause panic and amusement that manages to be both entertaining and harmless. Three decades ago, the girls of the Class of 1992 certainly passed this fictitious exam as they pulled off one of the most successful senior pranks in Lawrenceville history. Hedberg, the ultimate judge of senior pranks, describes it as having a "flawless three-point landing" that involved "organization, good humor, and high literary skills." Math Teacher Nancy Thomas H'01 P'04 '07, who was Dean of Students at the time, was impressed by their ability to keep the complicated prank a secret. The legacy of the famed '92 Senior Prank should inspire current Lawrentians as they prepare for many more years of devious V Form trickery.

In the spring of 1992, the fifth class of girls since the School's transition to coeducation was preparing for their upcoming graduation. After five years of administrative advertisements regarding the presence of girls on campus, Katie Post '92 P'23 and her "Reynolds Posse" grew tired of hearing about the greatness of coeducation. Wanting to move on from this transitional period, the girls of the Reynolds House secretly scavenged for stationery and stamps from faculty offices in order to execute the ultimate prank. Their

plan was to send fake letters to all parents of under formers under the name of the Head of School at the time Josiah Bunting III H'37 '59 '88 '91 P'88 '97, announcing a decision to return to Lawrenceville's past as an all-boys school. After the V Form girls stamped, licked, and sent each letter to families of the wider Lawrenceville community, Post described how "uptight parents went berserk over the news and were hiring lawyers to speak to the School about the matter. Meanwhile, students were thrilled by the success of the prank." For a brief time after the letters were sent, the entire campus was thoroughly confused, as the prank was covertly and flawlessly executed. After the initial disorientation on campus, Lawrentians, especially Bunting, caught onto the prank and appreciated its clever humor.

Both Thomas and Hedberg analyzed why the letters were so successful as it was, finding that not only was it well planned in great secrecy, but it was perfectly written in the Eurocratic tone of a Head of School, successfully confusing Lawrenceville families. Thomas refers to the prank as "a classy one," noting that nowadays this prank would not be able to work, since secrecy is far harder to maintain. Hedberg calls it the "best prank ever," earning an A+ in his book. Post, who played a significant role in the creation of the prank, said that her only regret was that they based it on a regression to an all-boys school, rather than a more drastic switch to an all-girls school. As one can imagine, that would have received much more backlash considering the letters' audience. Today's V Form and rising upperclassmen should take note of this influential prank from the Class of '92.

The Lawrenceville School

May 15, 1992

Dear Friends of Lawrenceville,

After months of careful deliberation and numerous conferences on the subject of single-sex education, The Lawrenceville School Board of Trustees, on April 24, 1992, made a final movement towards their decision regarding the gender of future Lawrenceville students.

It is with great pains that I must inform you of the outcome of these meetings, but please know that this decision was not reached without careful exploration of the many facets of Lawrenceville and the welfare of its community members. There have been far too many unanticipated complications that accompanied the admission of females to the campus back in 1987. Keeping in mind the best interest for all those involved, I regret to inform you that in the fall of 1992, Lawrenceville will return to its previous stature as an all-male educational institution.

The shock of this decision will certainly be felt by all, as it was in the 1984 decision of coeducation. Women were certainly a positive addition to our community, and in no way does this decision reflect the schools attitude toward women in general. Parents, we urge you to please assist us and take time to carefully explain to your sons and/or daughters that this decision is not an attestation to the quality of the of the female students that have been part of the Lawrenceville experience.

The committee agreed that swift action would result in sooner progress and success, therefore agreements pertaining to your child's education have been made between Lawrenceville and other distinguished secondary boarding schools. The following are a list of schools that are aware of our situation and have agreed to accept late applications up until August 10, 1992:



Box 6125
Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08648
(609) 896-1238

Associate Director of Capital Programs

Courtesy of Katie Post '92

The News at Your Feet: Brought to you by Nicholas Nehamas '07

CLAIRE JIANG '24
COPY EDITOR

Since graduating from Lawrenceville in 2007, Nicholas Nehamas has embarked on a rather remarkable career in journalism, winning the Pulitzer Prize alongside a group of international journalists for their article detailing the illicit Panama Papers, co-authoring two books, and working at the Miami Herald as an investigative reporter.

Nehamas' burgeoning interest in journalism began at Lawrenceville, where he captained House Football and House Soccer in the Cleve House and wrote for *The Lawrence*. He began writing for the newspaper as a III Former and joined the board as the Opinions Editor for the 126th Board, fondly recalling "heated discussions about how to frame stories and what we should print...it was invigorating to be down in Pop Hall late at night deciding what people would read the next day and what the discussion would be on campus. It felt like [I was] helping to shape what people talked about...those are the things that I still really enjoy about journalism."

Working on *The Lawrence* was Nehamas' "crucible that formed [him] as a journalist in a lot of ways." He recalled writing the main feature for *The Lawrence's* now-discontinued satire issue, *The Larynx*, about faculty turnover. The satire issue allowed him to voice opinions normally not printed in the regular paper. This experience helped him realize the importance of satire and journalism as "powerful tools for discussion and for good," and he strongly supports bringing *The Larynx* back.

After graduating from Lawrenceville, Nehamas attended Harvard College. For a while, however, he lost his interest in journalism after attending a few meetings for Harvard's newspaper, *The Harvard Crimson*, which seemed a lot less fun and far more serious than *The Lawrence*. In retrospect, Nehamas recognized that the *Crimson* "is like a professional [newspaper], but it just didn't seem as much fun as *The Lawrence*, and so [he] drifted away from journalism in college." A creative nonfiction writing class reignited Ne-

hamas' "love for storytelling and interviewing"; he reflected, "My God, I got back into journalism through the classroom, which felt like the thing that had been missing from my life."

Nehamas attended the Columbia Journalism School after graduating college, and then he joined the *Miami Herald* in 2014. He described his job in South Florida as following the same principles as *The Lawrence* does: "along with the other media outlets, we help to set the conversation. There's a real responsibility to that, so it's both very serious, and as a career I also find it very enjoyable. I get to talk to lots of different people about lots of different kinds of things and...I always have the opportunity to learn something new, which is intellectually stimulating and exciting."

A milestone in his career was helping to uncover the Panama Papers, millions of financial files from an offshore law firm that exposed to the world a network of tax havens in 2016. The papers revealed proof of fraud, tax evasion, and avoiding international sanctions by the Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca. Successfully documenting the Panama papers "required [him] to share all the information [he] found" in a private forum of journalists from all across the world, as opposed to a more traditional form of journalism that was "all about the scoops and exclusives." Because "sharing information and sharing findings in the Panama Papers [was] really the only way to get the story," Nehamas believes that the Panama Papers helped set the precedent for collaboration, as opposed to competition, in breaking important news.

Initially working as a real estate reporter for the *Herald*, Nehamas also noticed a pattern of expensive housing costs for the working and middle classes in Miami. His role in leaking the papers was to show "how borrowing money, especially money from people linked to wrongdoing in their home countries: corrupt politicians, alleged criminals, spies, was being legitimized and used to buy condos and mansions in Miami, making

housing more expensive for people."

In addition, Nehamas wanted to show Americans who "normally might not care about offshore plants" how these activities "enabled criminals to help drive up the prices of homes in Miami. [He] was taking something that seemed very far off and making it feel very relevant to [the *Herald's*] readers."

Nehamas and his *Herald* colleagues were also named Pulitzer finalists in 2019 for their series "Dirty Gold, Clean Cash." He is also the co-author of two books: *The Grifter's Club: Trump, Mar-a-Lago, and the Selling of the Presidency* and *Dirty Gold: The Rise and Fall of an International Smuggling Ring*. Nehamas described his interest in the lucrative financial world as simply an offspring of "being an investigative reporter" in Miami. He talked to former realtors and bankers "who said that they used to do deals with their clients, [who] came in carrying literal duffel bags full of cash, which is obviously dirty money. Since then, dirty money has gotten a lot more sophisticated: It is now a very professional army of lawyers and accountants and real estate agents and bankers who work to launder dirty money abroad." A key example of such was narco-traffickers from Peru "using very illegally mined gold from the Amazon and selling it to [big companies] like Apple, Tiffany, Fortune 500."

Nehamas' work on discovering dirty gold "was very much like the Panama papers in...trying to show American readers that something that felt very far off, like illegal gold mining in the Amazon, was actually very close to them. That gold ended up in their jewelry and their electronics and their bank accounts and enabled drug trafficking and human trafficking and environmental destruction."

In the foreseeable future, Nehamas sees himself continuing to investigate the condo collapse in Surfside, Florida, which killed 98 people in September 2021. Along with his *Herald* colleagues, he has "done a lot of reporting on the condition of the building, how it was allowed to deteriorate, and basically all the things that went wrong. This was



Nicholas Nehamas '07

Courtesy of the *Miami Herald*

a completely preventable tragedy yet 98 people lost their lives." He hopes to bring to light the dangerous housing situations many Americans and people across the world are living in, using the Surfside collapse as a striking example. With the Florida midterm elections coming up, Nehamas will also be doing political coverage on Governor Ron DeSantis' re-election campaign and the upcoming primary in August.

Despite his own predictions, Nehamas recognizes that news is constantly changing and happening everyday. Since the beginnings of his career, he has seen the change within investigative journalism from "the stereotype of a domesticated journalist—a lone wolf working on his or her own, hoarding information, and then breaking the big scoop" to a greater willingness "to collaborate and to work in teams, partly because data work has become such a big part of the field...and so investigative reporters need to be able to work" with data reporters, co-

deres, developers, and other reporters.

His belief in the spirit of collaboration and camaraderie has passed down to his work in investigative journalism. Nehamas said, "I really like working with teams. I think it makes my work better...when I was at Lawrenceville, it wasn't just about what you [could] do for yourself, it was what you [could] do for your community, and I think that's a really important part of good journalism."

"The country has changed so much since I was in school, and I hope that Lawrenceville is still teaching its students to fight for inclusivity, to fight for democracy, to fight for social justice, and [ending] discrimination...and inequality," added Nehamas. To current and future Lawrentians, he says that "attending Lawrenceville puts you in a position to make positive change in the world. It's a real privilege and an honor to [attend] a school of that quality and I would urge people to do something meaningful with that opportunity."

Pounding Ahead: Big Red Dog Pound's Big Plans for Spring

NICHOLE JIN '24

FEATURES ASSOCIATE

This year, School President Annie Katz '22 and Athletic Representative Manoc Joa-Griffith '22 have revamped the Big Red Dog Pound to foster more school pride and bring the Lawrenceville community together.

The Big Red Dog Pound is a group of IV and V Formers who is responsible for helping plan and support athletic events, as well as acting as a "hype squad" for our sports teams. For example, they organized the Fall Term Pep Rally, the Winter Term Girls' Varsity Ice Hockey teddy toss, and the more recent Boys' Varsity Lacrosse tailgate. The 20-member council is composed of Big Dogs, a group of V and IV Formers, and four V Formers called Top Dogs who are handpicked by Student Council. This year's top dogs include Boys' Varsity Ice Hockey Captain Kenneth Back '22, Dickinson House Prefect and (almost) Pro Golfer Alec Brown '22, Girls' Varsity Lacrosse Captain Mel Josephson '22, and Senior PACKlete and Junior Varsity Sports enthusiast Sophia Pedretti '22. Pedretti said that in addition to



Kelly Lu '23/THE LAWRENCE

being at as many sports games as possible to cheer and show support: "being a Top Dog is also about encouraging other people to come, support, and yell as [loudly] as they can." She was invited by Katz to become a Top Dog and was excited to accept an official position yelling at sports games.

"Essentially, we decide on all of the 'Games of the Week,' pick the themes of big games, and brainstorm fun events we can do to hype up other competitions," said Katz on the

role of the Dog Pound. Joa-Griffith elaborated on his and Katz's goal for this year's Dog Pound by saying, "I want to recreate the way [school spirit] was my [II Form] year by shifting [the Dog Pound] more from athletics to overall student and Lawrentian pride."

With this term's loosened Covid-19 restrictions, Katz, Joa-Griffith, and the Dog Pound are trying to plan more athletic events. Describing the process of organizing Dog Pound events, Joa-Griffith

said, "[Katz] and I meet with the rest of Dog Pound to come up with ideas and pinpoint big future games that we really want to invest in." After these meetings, the Council then confirms its plans with Dean of Athletics Tripp Welborne H'58 P'21 '24 and enlists the help of Director of Student Life Ian August to organize logistics. To ensure equity in athletic turnout, Katz noted that the Dog Pound reaches "out to the captains at the beginning of the year...so [that they] can know [each team's] big games."

With the revamped Dog Pound, new events that had never been hosted before such as the teddy toss and tailgate were organized with "great turnout," according to Joa-Griffith.

On her experience planning events with the Dog Pound, Katz said, "It's been really fun to have that idea generator to reinvent what hype looks like at sports games."

Katz, Joa-Griffith, and the Dog Pound are currently working on planning a number of school-wide events for the remainder of the Spring Term, including a potential Spring Term Hill Day and selling

"Dollar Dogs" at a future baseball game against the Peddie School. Even for away games and sports like golf and crew that are "harder to get people to come to," the Council has come up with ideas for raising school spirit. "We're finding ways to support teams that don't normally get a lot of crowd turnout, either because it's not possible or because it's simply not a spectator sport," Katz said. Joa-Griffith elaborated by saying, "We're planning on doing more psychs, such as a home psych for golf and a sailor psych for crew" to provide support for those athletes. Katz added that the Dog Pound was thinking of hosting exhibition tennis matches in House doubles tournaments. "We [have] lots of events coming up, and I'm pretty excited," she said.

Reflecting on this year's Dog Pound, Katz said, "I'm really proud of what [Joa-Griffith] and the Dog Pound have done this year...It's been a great year for sports spectating, and I'm excited to finish it off with a bang." With the Dog Pound continuing to work hard, there will be many more exciting sports events to look forward to in the spring.

The Hair Splitting to End All Hair Splitting: Ranking the Best NBA MVPs Since 2000

BRYAN BOANO '25

At the end of every NBA regular season, a select group votes to decide the NBA's Most Valuable Player (MVP), based on who had the best 82-game season. Well...not really, because the MVP has to be on a good team in order to win a lot and to be highly seeded. But their team also can't be too good, because in that case, they might not be the most valuable. Sometimes, the seed doesn't even matter because the MVP does something really cool—but only sometimes. So maybe the most valued individual award in basketball is decided by completely subjective metrics that don't matter in the grand scheme of things. So, in honor of Nikola Jokic's being named the NBA's most valuable player for the second time, our elite group of sports journalists at *The Lawrence* will look back at the top five MVPs since the turn of the century. Since MVP is a regular-season award, playoff performance doesn't factor into the ranking. Also, I'm not including multiple MVP seasons for the same person because I don't want to talk about LeBron James that much.

Honorable Mention:

2007 Dirk Nowitzki

Do I actually believe that Dirk Nowitzki's 2006-07 season is the sixth-best MVP award of the 21st century? No, not really, but I felt like talking about him, so here he is on the list. Does that defeat the entire purpose of the list? Yeah, probably, but it's my article and you can't do anything about it, much like NBA defenders couldn't do anything to stop Dirk Nowitzki in 2007 (wow, that transition was rough). His 24.6 points per game (PPG) isn't exactly eye-catching, but his MVP was historic for numerous reasons. For one, he averaged 50 percent from the field, 40 percent from the three-point line, and 90 percent from the free-throw stripe, which becomes all the more impressive when you factor in the fact Dirk is seven feet tall: players that tall aren't supposed to be able to shoot that well. He also led his Mavericks team to a league-leading 67 wins while leading the league in advanced stats

like box-plus-minus (BPM). Overall, a very good MVP season: we don't talk about what happened in the playoffs.

Number Five:

2014 Kevin Durant

This is another MVP season that isn't talked about nearly enough. Kevin Durant is often described as one of the greatest scorers of all time, and this season best supports this claim. His scoring average for the season of 32.0 is the highest of his entire career, and he did it on an impressive 63.5 True Shooting percent (TS percent). Which, for those not familiar with advanced stats, means a lot of his shots went in: a pretty good thing. This is made even more impressive by the fact his all-star teammate, Russel Westbrook, played only 46 games of the season, meaning KD put up these numbers while he had almost all of the defense's undivided attention. In the games Westbrook missed, the Thunder were 25-11, a 57-win pace. Pretty good season from KD. I'd give it a 9/10.

Number Four:

2020 Giannis Antetokounmpo

Giannis entered 2019 as the reigning MVP in a season that has a very good case for being on this list itself—that is, if I hadn't omitted multiple seasons from the same player. How evil I am. To get back on track, Giannis wasn't satisfied with his performance from the previous season, for whatever reason, and just decided to become a lot better. He averaged 29.6 PPG, 13.6 Rebounds Per Game (RPG), and 5.6 Assists Per Game (APG). He became the first player to average 25+PPG, 10+RPG, and 5+APG more

than once over the course of a season. What makes this more impressive is that 65 percent of his shots were 10 feet from the basket or closer, and he shot 78 percent of his shots at the rim,

this were actually there to witness this season, I will simply throw a bunch of numbers at you and let you create the mental picture. O'Neal averaged 29.7 points, 13.6 rebounds, and three

blocks per game.

In addition to this, he led his Los Angeles Lakers to a 67-win season alongside his then-relatively unknown co-star Kobe Bryant. O'Neal also led the entire league in Player Efficiency Rating, total scoring, field goal percentage, BPM, and a bunch of other acronyms that sing his praises. He even went on to win the championship and a Finals MVP in the playoffs that year. Still can't visualize how dominant O'Neal was that season? Neither can I. Again, you just had to be



O'Neal dunking, or something (per Bryan's request)

Courtesy of Pinterest

meaning that basically every defender knew exactly where Giannis wanted to go, but still couldn't stop him from getting to the rim. If all that wasn't enough, he won Defensive Player of the Year (DPOY) as well, becoming the second player to win DPOY and MVP in the same season, not to mention leading Milwaukee Bucks on a near 70 win pace for a large majority of the season. Again we don't talk about the playoffs. Overall Grade: A

Number Three:

2000 Shaquille O'Neal

Throughout O'Neal's illustrious hall-of-fame worthy career, the 1999-2000 season stands out by far as his best, which just goes to show how good he truly was... 2000 Shaquille O'Neal was something that you just had to be there for. Or at least, that's what I'm told. But since few people reading

there, apparently. It's the same way people talk about the '90s. Hopefully, this article gets a picture of O'Neal dunking or something—I'll try and put that request in for you.

Number Two:

2013 LeBron James

There was a lot of deliberation that went into the decision of who to put at number one. After all, the title makes it clear that this is the ultimate hair-splitting. Just because James' MVP season isn't number one doesn't mean that it's bad. It's still a "10/10, A+, holy hell, he's insane at basketball" season. James put up averages of 26.8 PPG, 8 RPG, and 7.3 APG, which, on the surface, aren't as good as his 2009 MVP season that arguably could also be in this very spot. But the base stats are not where James's dominance ends. He did this while scoring 56 percent

shooting from the field, a stat that stands as the highest FG percent of his career up to this point. He also shot 40 percent from three for the only time in his 100-year-long career. He led the league in all the funny acronyms, like PER, BPM, and Offensive Win Shares. He also did this playing DPOY level defense. I say DPOY level, and not actual DPOY, because he didn't win the award when he really probably should have. Nevertheless, James just always looked like he had complete control of every game and made everything look so effortless. In terms of team success, he led the Heat to a 66-win season, a 27-game win streak, and a championship. I already gave my number ranking/grade earlier in the paragraph: now onto number one.

Number One:

2016 Stephen Curry

I know I used this joke literally two players ago, but 2016 Stephen Curry was another season you just had to be there to witness live. This MVP was the definition of historic because everything just seemed so perfect. First off, he pulled an Antetokounmpo and simply became a lot better after already winning MVP the season before, so much so that people were wondering if he could win Most Improved Player as well as MVP. Curry led the league in scoring with a 30.1 PPG, Offensive BPM, BPM, PER, Offensive Win Shares, and TS percent. He, like Dirk, had a 50/40/90 season, except he did it better by taking 11 three-pointers per game and making five of them a game, shooting 45 percent. This means he broke the single-season NBA record for threes made in a season by hitting 402. The previous record was 286, which he had literally just set the season before. His TS percent of 67 is genuinely insane. To cap it all off, he led his Golden State Warriors to a 73-9 record, the highest win total of all time. All of this made Stephen Curry the first unanimously voted MVP in NBA history, making his MVP season the greatest of all time. We're definitely not talking about what happened in the playoffs, though.

Athlete Profile: Connor "Dougie" Gately '24

DYLAN SINGLA '24

The Big Red Boys' Varsity Lacrosse team is having a historic season. The team is currently ranked fourth in the country and loaded with star-studded talent: including attackman Connor Gately '24, better known as "Dougie." Connor got his nickname from his coach, Jonathan Posner, who gave Gately the nickname over the summer by accidentally calling him Dougie during a game. It's safe to say the name stuck, to the point where the campus doesn't even know his real name. I got the chance to sit down with Gately and discuss his past, present, and future with lacrosse.

When asked why he came to Lawrenceville, Gately said, "I came to Lawrenceville for the elite academics and the opportunity to be a part of one of the best lacrosse teams in the

country." Gately's play on the field has earned him 22 goals and 21 assists for a combined 43 points in just 15 games, as well as a national ranking of number 52 in the class of 2024 by NLF rankings this spring. NLF calls Gately a "one-percent all-star" who is "very skilled and uses his shiftiness and quickness to make defenders look foolish." When asked about the ranking, Gately said, "it was a very cool experience to be considered one of the best lacrosse players in my class that would not be possible without the help of all my teammates and coaches." Gately credits a lot of his success to his teammates, furthering West-Point-Bound face-off specialist



Dougie carrying the ball.

Courtesy of Connor Gately '24

Rob Simone '23's statement that "[Gately] is one of the least selfish teammates I have played with." There is a lot of talk about Gately and his potential future in the sport.

Gately has said that "after graduating from Lawrenceville, [he] hopes to have the opportunity to play lacrosse at the next level in college." College commitment is something Gately can look forward to in the next few months, as many of the top lacrosse teams in the country will try to win him over and add his offensive prowess to their rosters. When asked about his plans for lacrosse after college, Gately responded, "While going pro would certainly be an incredible achievement, it is not something I have thought

about much." Gately is one of the best attackers in the country, but he still helps out the defensive side. He plays an instrumental role in the success of the team's 10-man ride zone defense with his quickness and pressing ability.

Gately is having an incredible season, along with the rest of the Big Red Boys' Varsity Lacrosse team. The team has achieved so much already, and they still have a whole month of lacrosse left to play. Dougie and the rest of the team know that the end goal is to win a national championship, a monumental goal that is more than possible with the season they're having. The whole campus is rooting for the team to bring home a national championship, and we're beyond excited to see what they're able to produce.